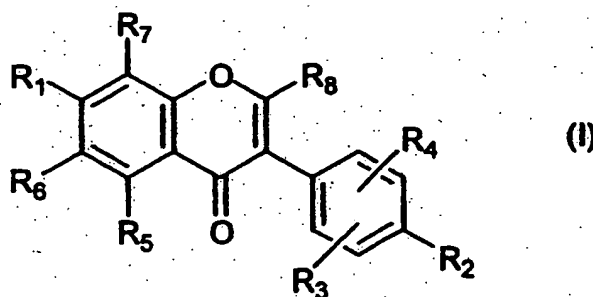


wherein

R_1 , R_2 , R_3 , R_4 , R_5 , R_6 , R_7 and R_8 are independently hydrogen, hydroxy, OR_9 , $OC(O)R_9$, $OS(O)R_9$, alkyl, haloalkyl, aryl, arylalkyl, thio, alkylthio, amino, alkylamino, dialkylamino, nitro, or halo; and

R_9 is alkyl, haloalkyl, aryl, arylalkyl or alkylaryl;

in high to quantitative yield and without the need for chromatographic purification;
comprising the step of hydrogenating a compound of formula I



wherein


R_1 , R_2 , R_3 , R_4 , R_5 , R_6 , R_7 , R_8 and R_9 are as defined above;

to prepare a compound of formula II; and

wherein the hydrogenation step is performed with hydrogen in the presence of at least one reduction catalyst and at least one solvent.

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- 
4. (Amended) A method of claim 1, wherein the at least one reduction catalyst is selected from palladium on activated carbon, palladium on barium sulfate, alumina powder, and platinum (IV) oxide.
 5. (Amended) A method of claim 4, wherein the at least one reduction catalyst is about 10% palladium on activated carbon.
 6. (Amended) A method of claim 4, wherein the at least one reduction catalyst is about 5% palladium on activated carbon.
 7. (Amended) A method of claim 1, wherein the at least one solvent is selected from a C₁-C₈ alcohol, an alkyl acetate, and a C₁-C₃ carboxylic acid.
 8. (Amended) A method of claim 7, wherein the at least one solvent is absolute methanol, absolute ethanol, or absolute ethyl acetate.
 9. (Amended) A method of claim 8, wherein the at least one solvent is absolute methanol.

Please add new claims 47 to 71 as follows:

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47. (New) A method of claim 4, wherein the at least one reduction catalyst is palladium on alumina powder.
48. (New) A method of claim 8, wherein the at least one solvent is absolute ethanol.
49. (New) A method of claim 8, wherein the at least one solvent is absolute ethyl acetate.
50. (New) A method of claim 7, wherein the at least one solvent further includes a C₁-C₃ carboxylic acid.
51. (New) A method of claim 1, wherein any free hydroxy substituents R₁-R₈ of the compound of formula I are first protected as acetoxy derivatives prior to the hydrogenation step.
52. (New) A method of claim 1, wherein the compound of formula I is diacetoxy daidzein.
53. (New) A method of claim 1, wherein the yield of the compound of formula II is from about 83% to quantitative.
54. (New) A method of claim 1, wherein the compound of formula II is a mixture of *cis*- and *trans*-isomers.

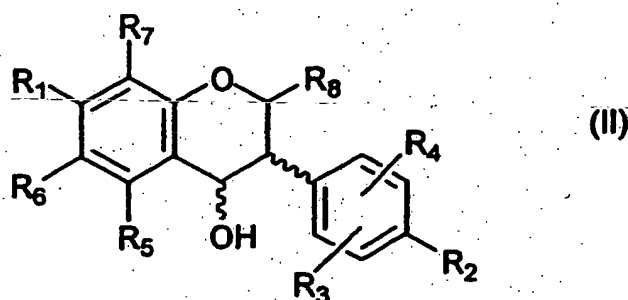
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55. (New) A method of claim 1, wherein the compound of formula II is the *cis*-isomer.

56. (New) A method of claim 1, wherein kilogram quantities of the compound of formula II are prepared.

57. (New) A compound of formula II

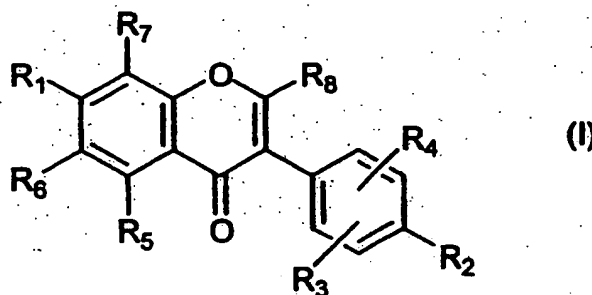


wherein

R₁, R₂, R₃, R₄, R₅, R₆, R₇ and R₈ are independently hydrogen, hydroxy, OR₉, OC(O)R₉, OS(O)R₉, alkyl, haloalkyl, aryl, arylalkyl, thio, alkylthio, amino, alkylamino, dialkylamino, nitro, or halo; and

R₉ is alkyl, haloalkyl, aryl, arylalkyl or alkylaryl;

comprising the step of hydrogenating a compound of formula I



wherein

R₁, R₂, R₃, R₄, R₅, R₆, R₇, R₈ and R₉ are as defined above;

to prepare a compound of formula II; and

wherein the hydrogenation step is performed with hydrogen in the presence of at least one reduction catalyst and at least one solvent.

58. (New) The compound of claim 57, wherein the at least one reduction catalyst is selected from palladium on activated carbon, palladium on barium sulfate, palladium on alumina powder, and platinum(IV)oxide .
59. (New) The compound of claim 58, wherein the at least one reduction catalyst is about 5% palladium on activated carbon.
60. (New) The compound of claim 58, wherein the at least one reduction catalyst is about 10% palladium on activated carbon.
61. (New) The compound of claim 58, wherein the at least one reduction catalyst is palladium on alumina powder.
62. (New) The compound of claim 57, wherein the at least one solvent is a pharmaceutically acceptable solvent selected from a C₁-C₆ alcohol, a C₁-C₆ alkyl acetate, and a C₁-C₃ carboxylic acid.

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63. (New) The compound of claim 62, wherein the at least one solvent is absolute methanol, absolute ethanol or absolute ethyl acetate.
64. (New) The compound of claim 63, wherein the at least one solvent is absolute methanol.
65. (New) The compound of claim 63, wherein the at least one solvent is absolute ethanol.
66. (New) The compound of claim 63, wherein the at least one solvent is absolute ethyl acetate.
67. (New) The compound of claim 62, wherein the solvent further includes a C₁-C₃ carboxylic acid.
68. (New) The compound of claim 57, wherein any free hydroxy substituents R₁-R₈ of the compound of formula I are first protected as acetoxy derivatives prior to the hydrogenation step.
69. (New) The compound of claim 68, wherein the compound of formula I is diacetoxy daidzein.

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70. (New) The compound of claim 57, wherein the compound of formula II is a mixture of *cis*- and *trans*-isomers.
71. (New) The compound of claim 57, wherein the compound of formula II is the *cis*-isomer.

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